(c) and (d) The Government of West Bengal submitted memoranda seeking Central assistance of Rs. 264.30 crores. A ceiling of expenditure of Rs. 67.72 crores has been approved. In addition, Rs. 0.06 crores for 1987-88 and 1988-89 for increasing vegetable production has also been approved.

(e) Rs. 24.415 crores has been released to the State Government during the current year as per details given below:—

	Amount released (Rs. in crores)	Date of release
1. Centre's share of Margin Money	11.875	25-8-1987
2. Ways and Means advance	10 00	6-10-1987
3. Non-Plan grant	2.54	23-10-1987
	24.415	

Illegal mining of minerals

*104. SHRI RAM NARESH KUSHWAHA:
SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the continuous clandestine mica mining taking place in the mica producing States in the country causing considerable loss of revenue to the Exchequer;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any critical study of the illegal mica mining identifying the persons involved and their *modus operandi* and the estimated loss of revenue annually as a result thereof; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof together with the measures taken by Government to check the illegal mining of minerals in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR): (a) to (c) The main mica producing States are Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. From the discrepancy in the figures of production reported for Mica and those of Mica exports, a Committee under the chairmanship of Shri G. S. Swaminathan in its report submitted in March 1981 came to the conclusion that there was illicit mining and underreporting of Mica producion and that this situation was mainly prevalent in Bihar. The Committee noted that a legal framework and administrative structure are available to prevent such illicit mining and recommended that State Governments should effectively implement the provisions of the Bihar Mica Act, 1947 and tone up the administrative machinery.

In September, 1985, a study was taken up jointly by the Indian Bureau of Mines and Department of Mines and Geology of the Government of Bihar to look into the discrepancy between the figures of production and exports of Mica. As a result of this study also, it was concluded that the discrepancy was on account of: (i) underreporting|misreporting of production by Mica producers, (ii) illicit mining, (iii) picking of waste scrap from old dumps by a large number of villag-

ers. On the basis of this study it was recommended that the State Government should tone up the administrative machinery and bring about close coordination between Inspector of Mica Accounts, District Mining Officer and Inspector of Mica Force. This and certain other relevant recommendations were communicated to the Governemnt of Bihar for implementation.

The State Governments are responsible for detection as well as prevention of such illicit mining and they have been requested to ensure that illicit mining is curbed by measures such as tightening of inspection of Mica mines and verification of production figures. This matter has also been reviewed from time to time in meetings with the Secretaries of State Governments for Mining and Geology and their attention has been drawn to the need to control illicit mining of Mica.

The Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 has been amended in 1986 to make illegal mining a cognisable offence and increasing the punishment from 1 year imprisonment or fine exceeding upto Rs. 5000/- or both into punishment for 2 years or with fine upto Rs. 10,000/- or with both.

In July, 1987, a Committee has also been constituted consisting of Controller-General, Indian Bureau of Mines and representatives of the States of Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra to consider difficulties experienced in checking possession and transportation of illegally mined minerals and for suggesting suitable measures to effectively check possession and transportation of illegally mined minerals.

Estimates of loss of revenue to the State Government on account of alleged illicit mining of Mica are not available.

Long-term schemes to prevent droughts

*105. SHRI KALPNATH RAI:
SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any long-term schemes have been drawn up to prevent the occurrence of droughts in future in the drought-prone areas;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether the assistance of scientific organisations has been enlisted to tackle the occurrence of drought with the technical 'know-how'?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI G. S. DHILLON): (a) to (c) Long-term Schemes to prevent the occurrence of drought: Earlier a Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) was launched to:—

(i) Promote productivity in drylands on the basis of soil and water conservation coupled with suitable cropping,

(ii) developing water resources for their productive use,

(iii) bringing back ecological balance by afforestation,

(iv) develop livestock and,

(v) develop silvi-pastoral and horticultural systems besides other diversified activities like sericulture and fisheries for generating rural employment. This programme is being implemented in 615 blocks in 90 districts of 13 States.